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NEW YORK • Holiday Edition, November 21-25, 2012

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Giving thanks for great entertainment

Heading into the Thanksgiving weekend, Metro offers a preview of the best new film releases and TV specials that will add to your holiday cheer {pages 14-18}

Rihanna keeps standing us up!
{page 20}

Avoiding extra Turkey weight
{page 23}

What's new at the Public Theater
{page 19}

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In the news

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NYPD officers were affected by Hurricane Sandy, Police Commissioner Ray Kelly said yesterday. The commissioner said the police department is trying to help the officers, many who lived in areas that were damaged by the storm, including organizing turkeys for them for Thanksgiving. METRO/AB

In the news

Skateboarder killed in Union Square

UNION SQUARE. A 24-year-old was killed while skateboarding near Union Square Tuesday. Police say he lost control and fell and was hit by a delivery truck. The driver remained with the accident victim until police and emergency personnel arrived to take him to the hospital, where we was pronounced dead. Police said they are not considering this a crime. METRO/DT

Cops bust Manhattan prostitution operation

- Advertised on online sites like Backpage
- Included drivers, ad agency, even people in the Philippines
- One suspected customer worked as Scarsdale dean

Officials busted a $7-million prostitution ring they said operated an agency in a Manhattan office to advertise Asian women on websites like Backpage, the Village Voice and Craigslist.

Police Commissioner Ray Kelly announced the bust Tuesday, saying that officers arrested 19 people in the Tuesday morning sting.

Officials said the extensive operation included drivers (one who had been in prison for a home-invasion robbery), bookers to answer calls and Somad, an advertising agency that created and monitored the ads.

Attorney General Eric Schneiderman said the agency workers were so savvy that they advised not to waste time posting ads during the Super Bowl, when fewer potential customers would be paying attention.

▶ Ray Kelly

19

People were arrested and charged with 180 counts, according to cops

"This is almost like the mob goes to business school," he said.

The operation prostituted about 40 women at any given time, mostly Korean and Chinese women, officials said.

"It essentially shows what you can do if you have a very high level of creativity and a very low level of morality," Schneiderman said.

The ring, which operated out of a 25th Street office, also included operatives in Queens, New Jersey and the Philippines.

Officials said one customer was David Mendelowitz, a guidance counselor and dean at Scarsdale High School.

He paid for prostitutes and cocaine, according to the criminal complaint, even as he was involved in the school's Drug and Alcohol Task Force.

The 16-month investigation revealed that prostitutes also supplied cocaine; in one case, a prostitute's daughter ferried cocaine to a client, Kelly said.

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Trafficking victims

Two human-trafficking victims are now with Sanctuary for Families, a nonprofit shelter, Kelly said. One of the women, rescued Tuesday, was a 31-year-old woman who just arrived from Korea this week, he said. A friend told her to meet her in the city, and instead people from the escort service arrived, he said. She told cops they took all the money and that she only worked for tips. "She had no idea where she was in New York or how to get home," Kelly said.

Quoted

"She had no idea where she was in New York or how to get home."
KELLY

In the news

METRO FILE PHOTO

▶ Staten Island Ferry

New ferry for Staten Island

STATEN ISLAND. Mayor Michael Bloomberg and Transportation Commissioner Janette Sadik-Khan announced a new ferry service between Staten Island and Manhattan. The ferry will run for eight weeks as storm recovery efforts continue, for a $2 one-way fare. METRO/DT

Officials criticize 911 during Sandy

NEW YORK. Public Advocate Bill de Blasio and Councilwoman Elizabeth Crowley asserted yesterday that Mayor Michael Bloomberg was incorrect in his assessment that the 911 system "functioned perfectly" during Hurricane Sandy. De Blasio and Crowley insist that the system failed to manage fewer than half the calls for which it was designed. They say the city has claimed that it should be capable of handling 50,000 calls per hour, but operators were overwhelmed by 20,000 hourly calls. METRO/DT

New shelter for women opens

MANHATTAN. The Bowery Mission opened a new transitional housing shelter for women in Harlem yesterday, which will house eight graduates of its nine- to 15-month women's residential program. The Mission purchased the building along with the building next door last year from a church. The buildings had fallen into disrepair after a decade of disuse, and donations and more than 3,100 volunteer hours completed renovations. Donna, a 65-year-old recent graduate of the 6-month program on the Upper East Side and a new resident of the building, said of the volunteers: "I never knew people like this existed." METRO/DT

Skate. Holiday

▶ Skate a cold winter night away at Citi Pond.

COURTESY OF CITI POND

Lace up your ice skates at Bryant Park

MIDTOWN. The ice skating rink at Bryant Park, which transforms into a winter wonderland neighbored by shops and the Celsius lounge, is now open. The Tree Lighting Ceremony at Citi Pond will be Nov. 27, which will include music, Broadway performers, ice skating stars and the lighting of the 55-foot Norway Spruce. The tree will be decked out in more than 30,000 lights and 3,000 ornaments. METRO/AB

News in brief

'Madam' spends 45 minutes in jail

NEW YORK. The so-called Upper East Side Madam Anna Gristina reported Tuesday to serve her sentence — but only spent about 45 minutes in custody. Gristina pleaded guilty in September to a felony, promoting prostitution, after a sting operation revealed an elaborate brothel run out of an East 78th Street apartment. In exchange for her plea, she was sentenced to time served in state Supreme Court, which resulted in less than an hour behind bars Tuesday. After she was released, Gristina and her attorney, Norman Pattis, went to reporters to fire back against the district attorney's office calling her a pimp. METRO/CG

Quoted

"The system is more corrupt than the Mafia."
GRISTINA

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City's rate of volunteering near bottom in state rankings

New Yorkers have been rushing out to volunteer in the wake of Hurricane Sandy, distributing much-needed food and supplies, cleaning up debris and beautifying parks.

But they have not always been so generous with their time. A 2010 U.S. Census Bureau survey found that only 18.5 percent of New York City metropolitan area respondents did unpaid work for an organization in the previous 12 months, far lower than the national average of 26.3 percent.

Of the 51 largest U.S. metropolitan areas, only Miami had a lower volunteer rate.

New York City's 2008 volunteer rate of 16.6 percent and its 2009 volunteer rate of 16.4 percent were even worse. Numbers for the 2011 rate are expected out next month.

"Long commute times, lower rates of home ownership, a higher percentage of people living in multiunit housing, lower volunteer retention rate," Chris Spera, director of research and evaluation at the Corporation for National and Community Service, said as to why there are fewer volunteers here than elsewhere.

He pointed out that about one in two city residents take part in less formal giving back, such as helping their neighbors.

"New Yorkers have shown incredible compassion and generosity in response to Hurricane Sandy," he added.

Don Levy, director of the Siena College Research Institute, likewise doubted that New Yorkers were any less altruistic.

"People are better than what the census numbers seem to indicate," Levy said.

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SPENCER PLATT/GETTY IMAGES

▶ Hurricane Sandy galvanized many to volunteer.

Volunteer stats

Metropolitan areas with the highest volunteer rates between 2008 and 2010:

- **Minneapolis-St. Paul, Minn.:** 37.1 percent
- **Portland, Ore.:** 36.2 percent
- **Salt Lake City, Utah:** 34.1 percent

Metropolitan areas with the lowest volunteer rates between 2008 and 2010:

- **Miami, Fla.:** 15.2 percent
- **New York, N.Y.:** 17.2 percent
- **Las Vegas, Nev.:** 19 percent

▶ Kelly

Superstorm damaged evidence

NEW YORK. Some NYPD evidence may have been damaged in Hurricane Sandy, Police Commissioner Ray Kelly said Tuesday. He told reporters at an unrelated press conference at One Police Plaza that the storm may have damaged evidence being held in a Greenpoint facility. "There's potential for that," he said. "We're still trying to sort through this." He said they are working to see what was damaged and whether it will affect cases. "That is going to have to be addressed," he said. **METRO/AB**

Gov. Christie earns praise

NEW YORK. New York-area politicians won high marks from the city's residents for their response to superstorm Sandy, but it was New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie who most impressed New Yorkers, a Quinnipiac University poll revealed Tuesday.

Nearly 90 percent of New York City voters rated Christie's response to the storm as "excellent" or "good." Gov. Andrew Cuomo got high marks from 85 percent of voters. **REUTERS**

NY to miss fracking date

NEW YORK. Gov. Andrew Cuomo said New York will probably miss a Nov. 29 deadline to issue regulations on hydraulic fracturing for natural gas, restarting a public review that may delay drilling for months. The state issued a moratorium in 2010 so regulators could conduct an environmental survey and develop rules. **BLOOMBERG**

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News in brief

NYPD

▶ John Doe Duffel Bag

Kelly: Shopkeeper hunt narrowed to one individual

NEW YORK. Police Commissioner Ray Kelly said Tuesday that the police department is still looking for a person of interest, shown in video footage released Monday.

The man was dubbed "John Doe Duffel Bag" by police, and he was balding and wearing a long, blue jacket on security footage taken near the scene of the shooting of shopkeeper Rahmatollah Vahidipour last Friday.

"We still want to speak to the male in the picture," Kelly said, and added, "We want to talk to anybody who was in the area at that time."

He said cops have no description of a possible suspect, and they do not yet know if the murders were a hate crime.

The three murders shared similarities, he said: All three victims were by themselves near or after closing time. A small amount of money was taken in two cases, he said, and the victim's head was covered by cardboard or clothes.

No note was left, he said, and they were shot at point-blank range. Police officers are visiting local shopkeepers to warn them, he said. "We tell them to be vigilant, to be aware."

METRO/AB

Officials, experts warn of holiday shopping scams

The holiday season brings with it warmth, cheer and shopping.

But industry insiders and state officials are warning shoppers to be wary of holiday scams too.

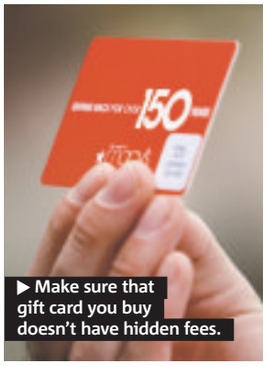
State Comptroller Thomas P. DiNapoli urged New Yorkers Tuesday to be mindful of fees, expiration dates or other rules or restrictions when purchasing gift cards and to be sure to use old gift cards they find.

Some companies might charge a service fee for purchasing the card, or a fee to call and check the remaining balance, or even a fee for not using the card, he said.

Online shopping has opened the door to an array of opportunities for scam artists.

Some people — an estimated 84,000 so far — have already received phony texts from different numbers offering free $1,000 Best Buy gift cards and directing them to sites with addresses like BestBuyWin.net or BestBuyContest.net.

GETTY IMAGES



▶ Make sure that gift card you buy doesn't have hidden fees.

Scam watchdog company Scambook warns not to fall for this "SMiShing," where scammers use mass texting try to trick people into giving up their personal and financial information.

Scambook says lawsuit damages associated with SMS fees and unwanted subscription costs could exceed $40,000 and anticipated an additional 100,000 cell phone users will have received these texts by mid-November.

The websites can be convincing, as they often appropriate the Best Buy logo and colors, said Scambook's Director of Marketing, Kase Chong.

These sites have no affiliation with Best Buy, however.

"To redeem their 'free prize,' a consumer would have to sign up for 13 separate special offers and recruit three friends to do the same, handing over personal information to these spammers in the process," Chong said.

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Common scams

Digital security company McAfee warns of the most common holiday scams.

- **Use caution downloading mobile apps.** They could be designed to steal information or send out pricey texts without your knowledge.
- **Look out for travel scams when scouting for low prices for trips home.** Scammers often use too-good-to-be-true offers to get financial info.
- **Possibly the creepiest threat:** Watch out for a Skype message scam that can hold your files for ransom.
- **Beware of fake gift cards.** Make sure your purchase is the real deal so that your loved ones don't end up with empty presents.

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Hamas says truce agreed; Israel, Egypt say no deal yet

U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton was in Jerusalem for talks on Tuesday with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu as expectations rose of a ceasefire soon to end a week of fighting around the Gaza Strip.

However, Gaza's rulers, the Palestinian Islamist movement Hamas, revised a statement that a truce would start overnight, saying it was still waiting for an Israeli response to proposals and did not now expect an announcement until Wednesday.

An official in the Egyptian government, whose new, Islamist leadership has been playing peace broker in Cairo, had also said a ceasefire could begin on Tuesday. But Israeli officials continued to say that discussions were still continuing.

Israel pressed on with its strikes in the coastal enclave on the seventh day of its offensive and Palestinian rockets still flashed across the border as Clinton arrived in Jerusalem. She was due to meet Netanyahu around 11 p.m.

One Hamas official had said a truce might start at 9 p.m. But after that moment passed, a senior figure in the movement, Ezzat al-Rishq, told Reuters in Cairo: "The truce is now held up because we are waiting for the Israeli side to respond.

The Jewish state launched the campaign last week with the declared aim of halting the rocketing of its towns from the Palestinian enclave, ruled by the Hamas militant group that does not recognize Israel's right to exist.

Netanyahu said earlier yesterday that Israel was open to a long-term deal aimed at ending Palestinian rocket attacks. **REUTERS**

GETTY IMAGES

▶ A Palestinian youth throws back a tear gas canister toward Israeli security forces during clashes in the city of Bethlehem.

First Israeli soldier dies

Medical officials in Gaza said 21 Palestinians were killed on Tuesday. An Israeli soldier and a civilian died when rockets exploded near the Gaza frontier, police and the army said.

Gaza medical officials say 130 people have died in Israeli strikes, mostly civilians, including 34 children. In all, five Israelis have died, including three civilians killed last week. **REUTERS**

Israeli missile makers strive to meet demand

Israel sees its Iron Dome anti-rocket system as a noted success of its Gaza assault. The only problem is keeping up with demand for the interceptor missiles, their makers said on Tuesday.

"We've been working in nonstop shifts," said an official with Rafael Advanced Defense Systems Ltd., which developed the system. He declined to be named for security reasons.

Equipped with five of the boxed-shaped batteries, the Israeli military says it has fired 360 missiles since the start of operation "Pillar of Defense" last Wednesday, which it says is aimed at halting rocket fire out of the coastal enclave. **REUTERS**

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Voice of Elmo quits after second sex claim

Clash is out

Street star hit by new sex claim

Kevin Clash, the puppeteer behind beloved Elmo of "Sesame Street," has resigned after he became embroiled in an underage sex scandal.

Clash announced he is permanently leaving the children's show after a second man, Cecil Singleton, named him in a lawsuit, saying he was 15 when he met and had sex with the 32-year-old Clash in 1993. Singleton said he met Clash during a gay phone chat, according to TMZ

This comes just one day after 23-year-old Sheldon Stephens, Clash's first accuser, said he wanted to back out of a settlement that gave him $125,000 in return for saying his sexual relationship with the voice actor took place when they were both consenting adults. Stephens' original claim that he was just 16 when he started having sex with Clash came to light last week. METRO

Royal baby talk

Friend sparks talk of announcement of a baby for Kate, Wills

A close friend of Prince William and Kate Middelton insists the royal couple is set to announce something big next month, prompting speculation that a baby is on the way. "They're planning to make an announcement in December," Jessica Hay, a former schoolmate of Middleton's, tells New Idea magazine, adding that the Duchess of Cambridge has gained a bit of weight. METRO

Guard stabbed

Attacker stabs guard with pitchfork at US embassy in Tel Aviv

A man apparently suffering from mental health problems stabbed a security guard at the U.S. embassy in Tel Aviv on Tuesday and was apprehended, police said.

"A Mazda car stopped next to the U.S. embassy and a man got out carrying a red bag and a pitchfork," said David Cohen, 48, who told Reuters he witnessed the incident while jogging along Tel Aviv's Mediterranean promenade.

Police said one of the guards was slightly wounded and the attacker was taken into custody. REUTERS

Fuel on the move

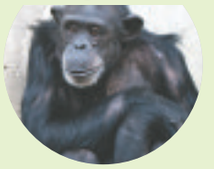
West worried about fuel movement to Iran nuke plant

Western officials voiced concern on Tuesday about what they described as an unexpected unloading of fuel at Iran's first nuclear energy plant and said Tehran, which has dismissed it as a normal step, must clarify the issue.

The U.N. nuclear agency said in a confidential report on Friday that fuel assemblies were transferred last month from the reactor core of the Russian-built Bushehr plant to a spent fuel pond, but it gave no reason for the move. REUTER

1K The 1,000-megawatt Bushehr plant is a symbol of what Iran calls its peaceful nuclear ambitions.

Middle age blues



Chimps, orangutans get mid-life blues

A new study finds that chimpanzees and orangutans, too, often experience a mid-life crisis, suggesting the causes are inherent in primate biology and not specific to human society.

"We were just stunned" when data on the apes showed a U-shaped curve of happiness, said economist Andrew Oswald of the University of Warwick in England and a co-author of the paper, which was published on Monday in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the USA. REUTERS

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Artwork puts old CDs in good light

An artist has created a festive display of light, using thousands of old CDs. Bruce Munro's work, entitled "Blue Moon on a Platter," forms part of the Christmas decorations at Waddesdon Manor in Buckinghamshire, England, a Neo-Renaissance style of a French chateau originally built for the prominent Rothschild family of bankers. METRO WORLD NEWS

"At dusk, when the CDs reflect the light from the sky and the landscape is dark, the installation shines brightest and looks like a massive sequin bead"
ARTIST BRUCE MUNRO

Munro spoke about his work

What's special about CDs as an artistic material?
Their iridescent quality of reflecting light — they look just like a rainbow.

But what's so unusual about the CDs is that they seem to reflect light better when there is not a lot of natural light around. At dusk, when the CDs reflect the light from the sky, that light is more radiant than the light of the surrounding landscape, which is now shrouded in darkness. At that point, the installation looks like a giant sequin bead.

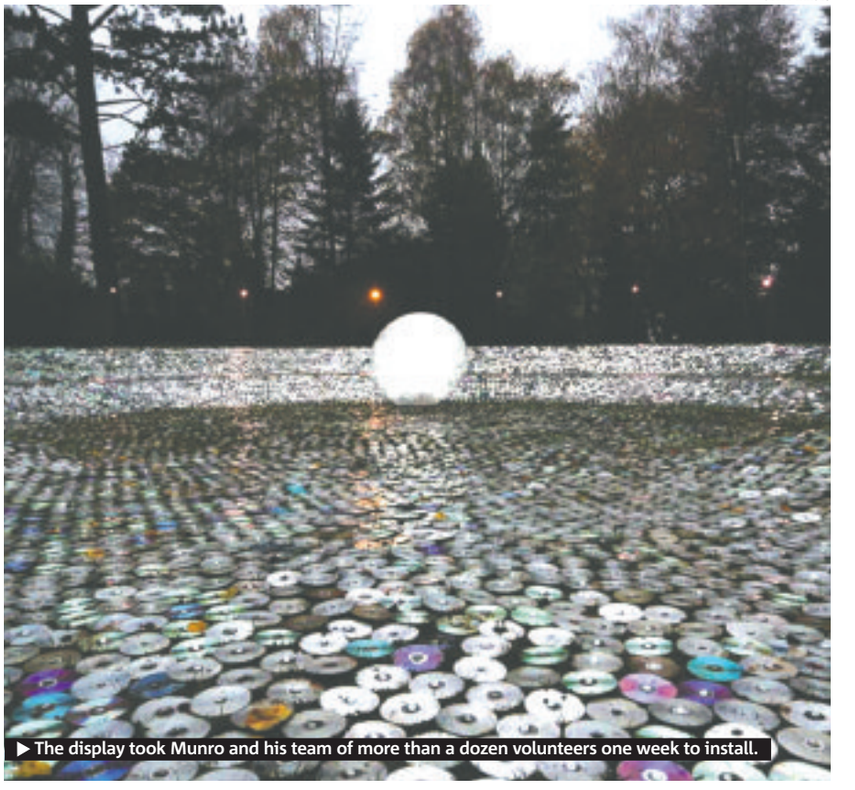
What do you hope visitors to take away from this?
There is a connection with this and Christmas decorations, but I hope they don't see it that way.

I hope that this will make people's day slightly better, make them smile — it's a bit of fun, after all.

Project facts

- **50,000** unwanted CDs were used in Munro's installation, donated by a local recycling center. They were placed on a grassy amphitheatre that measures 28 meters across.
- The "moon" glows with blue light, which is passed along the fiber optics via a metal halide projector.

GETTY IMAGES



▶ The display took Munro and his team of more than a dozen volunteers one week to install.

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WEEKEND

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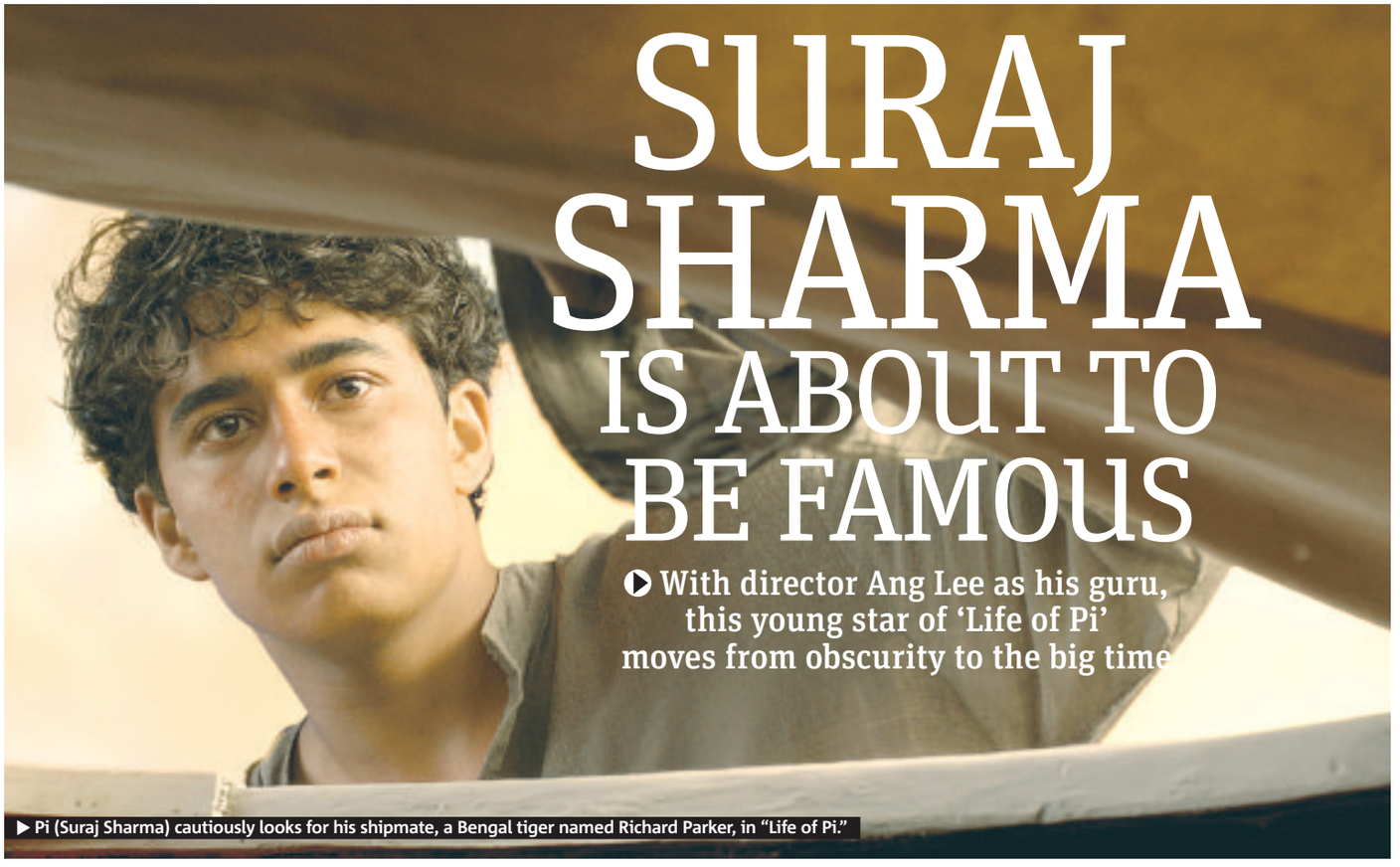


SURAJ SHARMA IS ABOUT TO BE FAMOUS

With director Ang Lee as his guru, this young star of 'Life of Pi' moves from obscurity to the big time

▶ Pi (Suraj Sharma) cautiously looks for his shipmate, a Bengal tiger named Richard Parker, in "Life of Pi."

Suraj Sharma is pretty much your average student. He's polite, well-spoken and majoring in philosophy at college this year. He also just starred in the new epic 3-D film by Ang Lee and counts the venerated director as a close friend who is legitimately his guru (there was a ceremony and everything). Sharma had never acted before he took the title role in "Life of Pi" — he was selected out of thousands of nonprofessional actors auditioning for the part. Playing a young man adrift at sea, Sharma lost weight, gained weight and learned to fish. Along the way, he tells us, the film changed him into the man he is today.

What path you were on before this movie happened and where do you see things going now?
Before the movie I didn't really know what to do. I was in school and I was, I would say, lost. … Luckily enough, [director Ang Lee] picked me up, took me to Taiwan. Over there, I changed as a person. I realized more about myself, more about everything. Working with Ang changes you, I guess. Before "Pi" I was really a bad student. I didn't do very well in school at all, ever, and I came back and I changed in a million ways. … I did surprisingly well in school. I didn't even know how. Suddenly I was getting, like, 94 percent. I decided now in college I'm doing philosophy. Things really changed.

"I changed as a person. I realized more about myself, more about everything. Working with Ang changes you." SURAJ SHARMA

Did the movie inspire you to choose philosophy?
Oh yeah. I think Ang and Pi got to me. Lying on that board and talking to Ang, you kind of start thinking on those lines, you start thinking about things, because Pi himself is this kid who asks questions like, "What is life?" He is into philosophy of his own kind and Ang himself has a really complex philosophy, which comes through when you talk to him. You kind of start thinking along those lines. Eventually I want to be a filmmaker, so I guess philosophy will help me in that way.

Some actors in your position might say forget school and do acting full-time.
I don't know about the acting. I don't know whether I want to act professionally much. It's daunting, it's scary and it's different. I want to be a filmmaker. I want to tell stories. … I love acting now and the life is hard. I don't know if I'm equipped for it, but I'd like being on-set. I think that's the most inspiring part of movies — just being on-set. The intensity with which everybody works, 300 people just working, working, working for something, maybe even three seconds long, different skills, different ideas, different backgrounds — everything just comes together and you make something and you make someone's imagination come to life.

I read that your mother had a ritual performed in order for Ang to become your guru.
Basically my mum was kind of hesitant about the whole thing. She was scared it was a risky decision. I was scared, too. In India the guru is a really important person. You kind of give yourself to them. … so I kind of asked him to be my guru and I did pranama, which is basically you kind of submit yourself. He accepted me as his student and he took it very seriously. It's nice to see other people take things that are important to you seriously. He's an amazing and really important person. Seeing him care for you like that is really humbling.

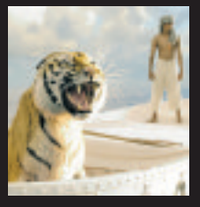
Q&A

Acting is hard normally — but then you also had to gain weight, lose weight, learn how to swim, learn how to fish. Which one of those tasks was the most challenging?

I think it was all just one, it came as one big package. I had to learn how to swim. I had to learn all these sea skills, do yoga, meditate, work out, gain weight, lose weight. I had to read books, learn how to act. There were a million things to do. I can't say one was harder than the other, it just all used to happen every day. So it was a big challenge just being there. All I wanted to do was keep Ang happy, because he had put so much trust into me. Fox and the crew, everybody was trusting someone who had no idea what they were doing.

HEIDI PATALANO
heidi.patalano@metro.us

Review



It's a nearly perfect 'Pi'

'Life of Pi'
Director: Ang Lee
Cast: Suraj Sharma, Irrfan Khan, Rafe Spall
Rating: PG
Grade: ❶❷❸❹½

Based on the book by Yann Martel, the story follows Pi Patel, who finds himself literally adrift in the Pacific Ocean after a boat carrying his family and all of the animals that once lived in their zoo capsizes. Left at sea with no one but a zebra, a hyena, an orangutan and a tiger named Richard Parker, Pi must do whatever it takes to keep himself alive and keep the Mr. Parker from getting hungry.

The 3-D special effects in the film are nothing short of dazzling. It's a feast for the eyes to be sure, even when the story's solitary nature leaves us wanting for a little more plot. One can easily begin to feel as bored as Pi. But the love and dedication director Ang Lee put into the film shows and the result is a well-rounded film that's a treat on many levels. METRO/HP

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Review

FILMDISTRICT

▶ "Red Dawn" hits theaters Wednesday.

'Red Dawn' gone wrong

'Red Dawn'
Director: Dan Bradley
Cast: Adrienne Palicki, Josh Hutcherson, Chris Hemsworth
Rating: PG-13
Grade: ❶❷❸❹❺

Which is more implausible: that the North Koreans would invade the West Coast of the U.S., turning friendly suburbs into occupied territories? Or that "Thor" star Chris Hemsworth and "The Wackness" and "Drake and Josh" alum Josh Peck are brothers? (It doesn't help that Hemsworth happens to have a very believable actual younger brother named Liam currently starring in films.)

Let's be honest: The original 1984 "Red Dawn" (with Patrick Swayze and Harry Dean Stanton) retains its cult classic status despite — or because of — its lack of quality. It's a silly, cheese-ball piece of late-Cold War paranoia, and at least it had the chutzpah to feature a big bad guy in the Soviet Union. The remake's decision to rewrite the Chinese villains as North Korean in post-production — without any reshoots or recasting — was apparently done to improve its chances of playing in China and taking advantage of the country's box office. It's an example of a "playing it safe" mentality that ultimately sinks the film itself. If they had just embraced the cheese, this could've been a lot of fun. **NED EHRBAR**

'Rise of the Guardians' not quite a holiday classic

'Rise of the Guardians'
Director: Peter Ramsey
Cast: Alec Baldwin, Jude Law, Hugh Jackman, Isla Fisher
Rating: PG
Grade: ❶❷❸❹❺

PARAMOUNT PICTURES

▶ The guardians show off their holiday loot in "Rise of the Guardians."

"Rise of the Guardians" revisits the simplicity of childhood, which has sadly been forgotten in many recent animated films. The Dreamworks flick is smart and innovative as it follows an "Avengers"-style storyline based on a group of iconic, mythical characters like Santa Claus and the Easter Bunny, who form an allegiance to protect the memories of children, which are being threatened by an evil spirit known as "Pitch." One of the strongest aspects of the film is how perfectly each character was cast. Alec Baldwin plays an unorthodox Santa Claus, whilst Isla Fisher is a lovable, modern-day version of the Tooth Fairy. Not only is the story suitable for children — teenagers and older audiences can also relate to the film as it explores a range of emotions and themes with a reasonable level of maturity and sophistication.

Based on the novels by William Joyce, "Rise of the Guardians" is a magical story that has the basics of a holiday classic, yet it's hard to shake the feeling that there is something missing. Whilst the film leaves adults feeling nostalgic and warm and fuzzy inside, children might not find the flick as enjoyable and unforgettable as other holiday-themed favorites like "The Grinch" or "A Christmas Story."

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TV watch list

'A Charlie Brown Thanksgiving'

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Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade

SPECIAL. Your annual Thanksgiving dinner appetizer includes the requisite balloons, floats, marching bands, cheerleaders and celebrities such as Flo Rida and Carly Rae Jepsen. **Thursday, 9 a.m., NBC**

'Michael Jackson: Bad25'

SPECIAL. Director Spike Lee honors Michael Jackson's "Bad," 25 years after it delivered the indelible singles "Smooth Criminal"

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▶ Snoopy prepares dinner on "A Charlie Brown Thanksgiving."

and the title song, in this film. Famous Jackson collaborators and fans such as "Bad" music video director Martin Scorsese offer their perspectives on the creation of the album and its enduring genius. **Thursday, 9:30 p.m., ABC**

'Trapped in the Closet'

DRAMA. The R. Kelly saga that began as one wonderfully weird tale of infidelity has officially turned into a full-blown soap opera. The new chapters nicely reference previous indiscretions while introducing new players, like a couples therapist played by the singer. **9 p.m., IFC**

'It's a SpongeBob Christmas!'

SPECIAL. Plankton tries to get on Santa's (John Goodman) nice list in this stop-motion animation special. **Friday, 9:30 p.m., CBS**

'Whisker Wars'

REALITY. The best beards in the world go face-to-face for follicular glory. **Season premiere, Friday, 10 p.m., IFC**

'The Chica Show'

KIDS. The breakout star of "The Sunny Side Up Show," Chica the Chicken, gets her own series to mesmerize the preschoolers — and adults with a soft spot for adorable squeaky puppets — in your life. **Series premiere, Saturday, 11:30 a.m., Sprout**

'Downton Abbey Revisited'

SPECIAL. This behind-the-scenes look at the series, hosted by "Downton Abbey" superfan Angela Lansbury and featuring interviews with the cast, should tide fans over until Season 3 premieres Jan. 6. **Sunday, 8 p.m., PBS**

'Liz & Dick'

MOVIE. The only Hollywood gossip more publicized than the relationship of Elizabeth Taylor and Richard Burton is the exploits of Lindsay Lohan. LiLo is Taylor to Grant Bowler's Burton in the movie that will have everyone talking — yet again. **Sunday, 9 p.m., Lifetime**

AMBER RAY

New Releases

SUZANNE TENNER

▶ Helen Mirren and Anthony Hopkins star in "Hitchcock," in theaters Friday.

'The Central Park Five'

This Ken Burns documentary explores the 1989 case of five black and Latino teenagers incarcerated for raping a white woman in Central Park. The film looks at the media coverage of the trial, public opinion at the time, and the lives of those wrongly convicted of the crime. A serial rapist pleaded guilty to the offense 13 years later.

'Hitchcock'

See Anthony Hopkins as Alfred Hitchcock in this film that chronicles the relationship between the famed director and his wife, Alma Reville (Helen Mirren), while he created "Psycho" in 1959. Scarlett Johansson and Jessica Biel also star in the film as two of his muses.

'Rust and Bone'

This French drama follows an unemployed man who moves in with his sister and her family to raise his son. He soon falls in love with a killer whale trainer (Marion Cotillard) after she is seriously injured.

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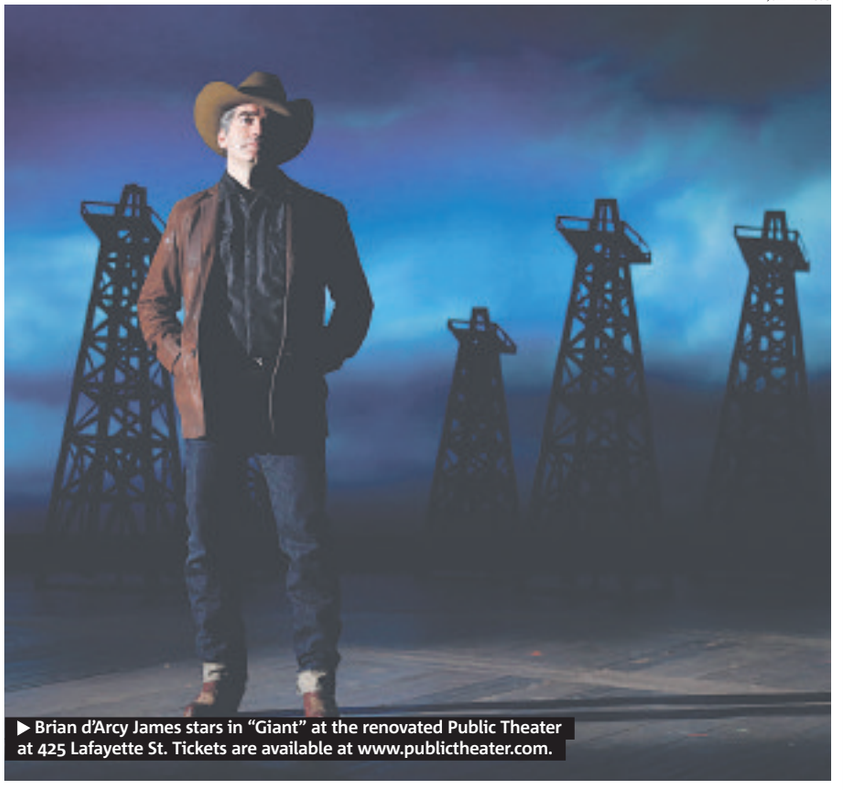

▶ Brian d'Arcy James stars in "Giant" at the renovated Public Theater at 425 Lafayette St. Tickets are available at www.publictheater.com.

Now playing at the Public Theater

The Public Theater has just finished its $40 million renovation to become an open, modern space where theatergoers or passersby can congregate for not only entertainment, but also food, drinks and conversation. Accompanying this landmark is a new set of shows to kick off the season — offering very inviting excuses to stop by and check out the transformed space at Astor Place. Here's a look at what's currently playing:

'Sorry' (Through Dec. 2)
As the third play in Richard Nelson's four-part series, "Sorry" joins the Apple family on the eve of election night in 2012. Whether or not audiences have seen the previous shows (featuring the same cast each year), they're swiftly caught up in the small and often sad dramas of one family living in Rhinebeck, N.Y. Politics concerning the polarized country are rivaled by personal battles woven in simple looks or outspoken sentiment as four siblings try to decide what's best for their increasingly sick uncle.

Also open

Instead of heading out into the cold after a Public Theater performance, guests can now stay for dinner at The Library.

Named for the building's original use as the Astor Library (and welcoming "Public Library" references), this cozy facility pairs an intimate bar featuring curated cocktails with limited seating for diners who can choose from a menu thematically divided into Act I, II and III. There's also a Curtain Call Menu for late-night bites. For reservations with your theater tickets, call 212-539-8777; learn more at **www.thelibraryatthepublic.com**.

'The Twenty-Seventh Man' (Through Dec. 9)
The tension is thick from the first beat of this play, adapted by Nathan Englander from his short story by the same name. In it, 26 of the Soviet Union's top Yiddish writers have been incarcerated for unknown (or likely nonexistent) crimes under Stalin's increasing paranoia and iron fist in 1952. But there is also an unknown 27th man in one particular cell, which is visited with voyeuristic integrity during the 75 emotional minutes of this tautly staged, not-to-miss play.

'Giant' (Through Dec. 16)
Based on the novel by Edna Ferber, this sweeping musical epic is a love song to the Texas of yore, with cowboys fighting oil barons and escalating racial tensions that threaten (or promise) to forever change the way of life for those in the Lone Star State — or as our hero calls it in song, "Heartbreak Country." His love for his ranch competes only with what's reserved for his displaced East Coast wife as Michael John LaChiusa's grand score soars through nearly three decades with the turbulent couple and the family that they create in the midst of fast-changing times.

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Weekly Photo Tip

A Picture Perfect Thanksgiving Gathering: Quick Tips for Storytelling Photos

The idea of Thanksgiving often brings to mind family, friends, food, football and, well, thankfulness, for all that the year has brought so far. This year, we'd like to encourage you to have some fun with your photography and consider moving from simple snapshots to storytelling.

Have a Plan (It's Easier than You Think!): We all know how frantically busy our schedules are between now and New Year's Day. That said, a little bit of planning now could save substantial time all through the holidays by helping you be fully prepared for every photo opportunity.

Take a few minutes to consider how many people will be gathering this year and what you hope to accomplish. For example, which room would be best for photographing family? One that has a nice amount of available light and a bit of space to pose is far superior to one that is dark and cramped. What about the table setting? How do you envision people positioned? You don't have to have all the answers. Just start considering the possibilities and the answers will come.

Get Your Gear in Order: Check your camera bag to ensure you have everything you need. Have your batteries fully charged, or if you use AA batteries, have an extra set packed and ready to go. Do you have a tripod? If you've often wished you had a tripod but have yet to purchase one, consider doing this before the holiday season kicks into high gear. A quality tripod can open up numerous possibilities in terms of shooting and posing. Plus, a tripod provides stability, which translates into sharper images. Create a Shot List: A shot list is essentially an outline of which photos you'd like to take during an event. For example, if you have a large family grouping, you might include the entire family, and smaller groups on your list. This takes just a minute or two and can spur your creativity and keep you from forgetting important shots. Will you want a photo of the turkey carving? The kids jumping in leaves? The table setting before everyone is seated? Think of the overall story you hope to share through your photos. A bit of thought now can make a positive impact on your final results.

Tackle Tough Issues in Advance: If you're concerned about how to fit the entire table in a shot or have struggled in past years to capture the kind of images you had hoped to create, consider taking some time in advance to work out the kinks of your shoot. For example, would a stool and a tripod make a difference? Do you need to have additional lighting in the room but didn't have time to figure out what would work best? Grab an extra lamp and ask a family member to pose for a few minutes and then analyze your results. And consider a portable lighting solution:

This experiment can transform your Thanksgiving photography experience because you've had time to figure out what works, and you'll be more comfortable behind the camera when the holiday arrives.

Take it Outdoors: If the weather permits, consider taking part or all of your family outdoors. Use that great rock wall by the front of the house or a majestic tree as a backdrop. For those fortunate enough to have turning leaves and a burst of fall colors, incorporate those elements into your photos. If small children are included, consider taking photos earlier in the day when they may be more cooperative. If they grouse at being posed and photographed, let them play and interact and shoot candids instead. Don't expend too much energy getting a perfect posed picture; instead, make the overall mood and sentiment the priority.

Learn to Use Your Timer: Many of us are guilty of being left out of family photos because we're the ones taking the pictures. If this is the case, make it mandatory to learn the timer delay functions on your camera (and remember your tripod!) so that you'll be in the photos this year. For even more convenience, consider a wireless camera remote or perhaps a remote with a timer.
Your family surely misses seeing you in the pictures!

Once the holiday is over, these photos can be transformed into gifts such as enlarged framed photographs, digital scrapbooks or other gifts for the upcoming Christmas & Hanukkah season. We'd be happy to help you create personalized gifts with your images so stop by our store or send us an email. We're ready to help!

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The feed ...

Checking in with some of Metro's best readers to see what they've been up to — in their own words, in 140 characters or fewer.

In honor of the upcoming Thanksgiving holiday, we asked The Word's readers which celebrity they were most thankful for and why.

@michkd I'm most thankful for @joelmchale who entertains me everyday on @TheSoup

@sarrible Shirtless soccer players holding babies. Any of 'em. All of 'em. God bless 'em.

@MeredithAtMetro Thankful that Jersey Shore was canceled. The party ended a longggg time ago

@cardiff_flyer Thankful that Barack won, that Howard Stern disapppeared, and impressed Justin T. helped in Rockaways.

@dsensationale I am less thankful for celebrities than I am for your column keeping us up to date when they screw up.

THE WORD

Metro's **Dorothy Robinson** shares her take on the world of gossip **@dorothyatmetro** **dorothy.robinson@metro.us**

▶ Rhianna at Kentish Town's HMV Forum in London on Monday. She later took off her shirt and performed only in her bra.

Rihanna's 777 tour disappoints fans, journalists and her backing band

After being more than four hours late for her performance in Berlin on Sunday, we were pleasantly surprised when **Rihanna** was only an hour late on Monday to light the Christmas lights at the Westfield Shopping Mall in London. Rumors swirled that she pocketed around 500,000 pounds just to show up, but a representative from the mall denied that rumor.

"I love this album like it wasn't my own!" she exclaimed about the launch of "Unapologetic." But after only one song, she took off in a golf cart.

Audience members were not happy.

"I love Rihanna, but she could have played more than one song."
VANESSA LEADBETTER, FAN

"I've been waiting since 12 o'clock. I love Rihanna, but she could have played more than one song," fan Vanessa Leadbitter lamented.

We then followed the elusive star to her intimate show at Kentish Town's HMV Forum, which she almost (almost!) made on time. There, she put on her best performance since Saturday's show in Stockholm.

She was nowhere to be seen at the after-party, but the backing band was (kinda) pleased about the show. "It helps not being four hours late," one muttered.

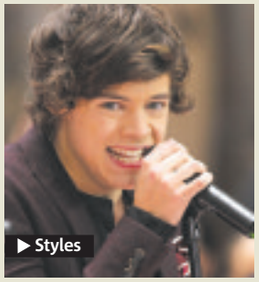
On the flight to her final stop in New York City on Wednesday, missing posters circulated which read: "Missing: Robyn Rihanna Fenty," as the songstress hasn't been seen on the plane by the two hundred journalists and fans beyond passing out champagne to them on the first day.

*— Metro's **Katarina Matsson** has tried to follow Rihanna on her 777-tour. She, and her fellow journalists and fans, haven't had much luck.*

Talking points

The latest on Gomez and Bieber

It's getting tough to keep track of where **Justin Bieber** and **Selena Gomez** are in their breaking up and making up. After a fiery, argument-filled dinner this weekend that ended with Gomez storming off, the pair apparently reunited after the American Music Awards Sunday night to celebrate Bieber's wins, according to Us Weekly. Gomez and Bieber hit up a private party hosted by Bieber's manager, sticking to a hidden table in the back room with plenty of security around as they snuck in a few kisses, a source reveals, adding that they were "dancing on each other. They seemed to be in great spirits and were clearly enjoying their time together."



▶ Styles

Swift moves on with One Direction star

Taylor Swift appears to have moved on from her recent breakup with Conor Kennedy, as the lovelorn singer is now reportedly dating One Direction member **Harry Styles** — or at least they're "officially hanging out," according to **Mario Lopez**, who saw the two walking hand in hand after a taping for "The X Factor" last week. Apparently that's all it takes to spark death threats for Swift from Styles' diehard fans. "I'll murder Taylor Swift. She will not date my Harry," one fan wrote on Twitter, while another got a bit more graphic: "I want to stab you to death and play around with your blood."

Kutcher follows Kunis around

Ashton Kutcher seems to be choosing where to spend his time these days based on where rumored girlfriend **Mila Kunis** is shooting a movie. After a few months in New York, the couple has now been spotted in Rome, where Kunis is filming "The Third Person," according to Hollyscoop. They also found time for some romantic dinners out and strolling around the city while holding hands, doing little to keep their relationship under wraps.

Hot shot.

ALL PHOTOS GETTY IMAGES

Snooki releases her 'couture' fragrance

An almost unrecognizable Snookie promoted her new perfume, Snooki Couture Fragrance, at Perfumania on Monday in New York City. Right. Because nothing quite says "couture" like a hot pink, leopard print bottle and a party at a place called "Perfumania."

Perfect wine pairings with Thanksgiving

Your turkey is defrosted, the cranberry sauce is made, and the pies are cooling. You're feeling on top of the world — until you remember that you need something to wash this all down with. Don't despair, Keri Levens, the wine director for Aquavit, New York's newly minted Michelin-starred restaurant, is here to guide you through the perfect pairings.

To begin, Levens recommends looking for a fuller-bodied white wine and lighter bodied red for your Thanksgiving table. "For white, I recommend Domaine du Tariquet, a wine producer from Gascony in southwest France. Look for their wine called Classic, a stunning white wine at an incredible value, around $9. This Uni Blanc/Colombard blend is perfect throughout the entire meal. For red, I look to the Pinot Noirs of Oregon such as Domaine Serene or Cristom for their elegance, versatility and ripe fruit and cranberry character," she says.

▶ Will your Thanksgiving table have the best wine pairings?

Levens notes that turkey can be a very tricky pairing. "There is much debate about whether to serve white or red," she admits. So she goes with one sommelier's secret: "Pair to the sauce instead."

And don't overlook dessert, which needs its own bottle. " It's best to go with a delicate and versatile option," she says. Levens likes Jalliance Clairette de Die, saying it's not overly sweet.

"This delicate sparkler is made with 100 percent Muscat, the same grape as Moscato, so it won't be too heavy after a big meal. It has refreshing acidity to help lighten a rich dessert like pumpkin pie."

DOROTHY ROBINSON
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Other suggestions

- **Aperitif:** Greet family and friends with a flute of sparkling (and affordable) Jaillance Cremant de Bordeaux or partner hors d'oeuvres with Domaine du Tariquet Classic, a refreshing white with delightful citrus notes.
- **Main course:** Alsace Riesling is the most versatile accompaniment for the array of Thanksgiving dishes. With enough body to stand up to the turkey and starchy dishes, its crisp acidity is refreshing throughout the meal. The "red wine-only" drinkers will enjoy Domaine du Tariquet's Chenin Blanc-Chardonnay or Alsace Pinot Gris for their food-friendly and fuller-bodied nature. Keep the bubbles flowing with Cremant d'Alsace Rosé, a dry and fruity sparkling wine that pairs excellently with cranberry sauce.
- **Dessert:** After a rich meal, try a lightly sweet and fizzy glass of Jaillance Clairette de Die Cuvee Imperiale. And it's reasonably priced — look to spend around $17 for a bottle.

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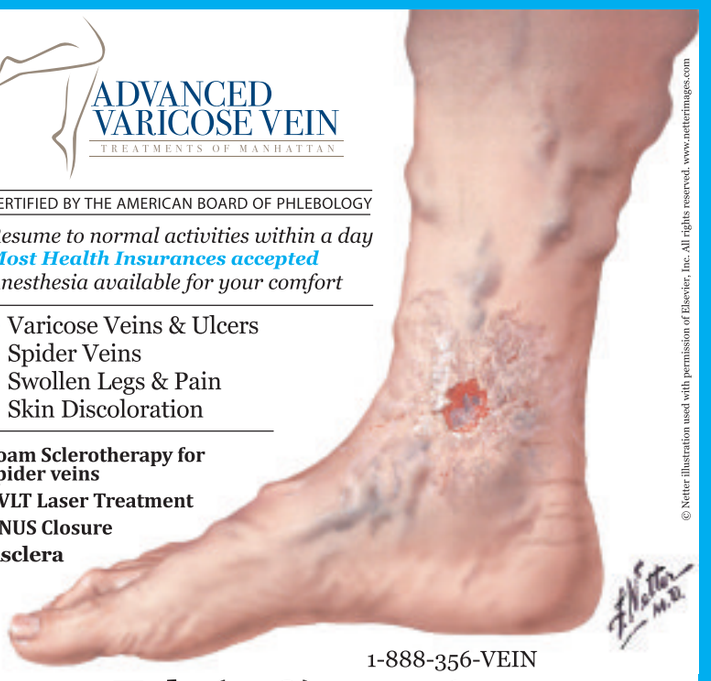

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Thanksgiving recipe

Guilt-free holiday treat

Chef and TV host Kelsey Nixon of "Kelsey's Kitchen" joined forces with Hershey's Moderation Nation program to create recipes that allow us to indulge during the holidays — without the guilt. Her solution: mini desserts. "Rather than filling up a whole plate with your dessert, bake or serve them in small containers like shot glasses or mini mason jars to help you keep the portions small, but fun," says Nixon. "It is also fun to give these as gifts or party favors over the holidays," she adds.

Maple Cream Brownie Shots

Servings: 16

Brownies ingredients:
- ½ cup all-purpose flour
- ⅓ cup HERSHEY'S Natural Unsweetened Cocoa Powder
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 2 large eggs
- ½ cup applesauce, unsweetened
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- ½ teaspoon vanilla extract

Maple cream ingredients:

▶ Indulge in a Maple Cream Brownie Shot without overdoing it this holiday.

- ½ cup heavy whipping cream (1 tablespoon per serving)
- 1 tablespoon pure maple syrup

Layered ingredients:
- ⅓ cup HEATH Toffee Bits, divided (1 teaspoon per serving)
- 16 fresh raspberries, divided (1 per serving)

Directions:

1 **Brownies:** Pre-heat oven to 350 degrees F. Grease an 8-by-8 baking dish.

2 In a mixing bowl, whisk together flour, cocoa powder and sugar until combined.

3 In a separate mixing bowl, whisk together eggs, applesauce, vegetable oil and vanilla extract. Add mixture to dry ingredients stirring to combine completely. Pour batter in even layer in prepared pan.

4 Bake in preheated oven for 30 to 35 minutes or until an inserted toothpick comes out clean. Remove from oven and cool pan on wire rack. Once cooled roughly cut brownies into (32) 1-by-1 squares; reserve remaining brownies for another use.

5 **Maple cream:** Add heavy cream and maple syrup to small mixing bowl. Whip until soft peaks form.

6 **Assemble in a shot glass:** Starting with one brownie square for the bottom layer, spoon ½ tablespoon of maple cream on top, followed by ½ teaspoon toffee bits. Repeat layering process once more with brownie, maple cream and toffee bits. Top with fresh raspberry for garnish.

Nutritional Information (per serving): Calories 150, Calories from Fat 60, Total Fat 7g (11% DV), Saturated Fat 3g (15% DV), Trans Fat 0g, Cholesterol 40mg (13% DV), Sodium 10mg (0% DV), Total Carbohydrate 22g (7% DV), Dietary Fiber 1g (4% DV), Sugars 17g, Protein 2g, Vitamin A (4% DV), Vitamin C (2% DV), Calcium (2% CV), Iron (2% DV)

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Tips for a healthier Thanksgiving

Thursday is the big day, and if you're not done preparing just yet, consider making some of these healthy edits to your menu.

It'll leave you more time to ponder the big questions, like "What time will Great Uncle Hank break out the flask?" and "Do I even own a turkey baster?" instead of the usual: "Has anyone seen my fat pants?"

How to lighten up

SWEET POTATOES
"Boil about 2½ pounds sweet potatoes, mash, add warming spices (cinnamon, nutmeg) and about 1 tablespoon vanilla, 1 tablespoon butter and about ¼ cup milk. It gives great flavor without sickeningly sweet sugar and excess greasy butter." — **NICOLETTE M. PACE, MS, RD, CDE, CDN, CFCS, FOUNDER OF NUTRISOURCE INC. (WWW.NUTRISOURCE.ORG), A COMMUNITY-BASED PRIVATE PRACTICE IN GREAT NECK, N.Y.**

MASHED POTATOES
"Instead of usual butter and whole milk mashed potatoes, I mash new potatoes with skin with skim milk, low-fat or nonfat plain yogurt and parmesan, with salt and pepper to taste. You can also mash them with chicken broth or, for the vegan, vegetable broth." — **KERI GANS, MS, RD, CDN, NUTRITION CONSULTANT AND AUTHOR OF "THE SMALL CHANGE DIET"**

▶ The secret ingredient to this pumpkin pie? A wheat germ crust! Get the recipe at www.metro.us.

GREEN BEAN CASSEROLE
"Choose light butter and use less of it, and go for low-fat milk. Saute your own onions in a small amount of olive oil, or add slivered almonds. You can also cook your own cream of mushroom soup to avoid the sodium in the canned version, or choose a low-fat version to cut down on the saturated fat. Whole wheat panko bread crumbs can replace the norm, or skip them all together." — **RACHEL BERMAN, RD, CSR, CDN, DIRECTOR OF NUTRITION FOR CALORIECOUNT.COM**

MEREDITH ENGEL
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At the table

Pile on the veggies. "Try making at least 50 percent of your plate vegetables. Challenge yourself to eat all your veggies so you are filling up on healthier, lower-calorie foods. This way, you will still have room to indulge but it will be easier to not go overboard." — **KERI GLASSMAN, MS, RD, CDN, FOUNDER AND PRESIDENT OF KERI GLASSMAN NUTRITIOUS LIFE AND NUTRITIOUS LIFE MEALS**

Don't drink your cals. "Keep all liquids calorie-free. Go with carbonated water or unsweetened iced tea." — **ROBERT FERGUSON, MS, CN, NUTRITIONIST AND FITNESS EXPERT @DIETFREELIFE**

Watch your serving size. "With any starchy side you need to practice portion control. Choose one and aim for 1/2 cup." — **KERI GLASSMAN**

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What your cough is trying to tell you

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I had a cold last week, and now have a cough that won't go away. Do I have anything to worry about?

A cough is the body's way of clearing out mucous or foreign material (like dust, hair or pollen) from your airways. The forceful muscular contraction of your diaphragm and chest wall muscles propels a blast of air out of your lungs, thereby moving the unwanted substance up and out of your chest.

A variety of illnesses and conditions can cause a cough. The most common of these include viral and bacterial infections that may result in bronchitis or pneumonia, or non-infections like asthma, allergies, post-nasal drip and Gastro-Esophageal Reflux Disease (GERD).

POLKA DOT

▶ An expectorant is the fancy name for the category of drugs that get mucous out of your system, like Robitussin and Mucinex. Remember to cough into your elbow, not your hand, to prevent the spread of germs.

Viruses are the most common cause of infections that cause coughing. The symptoms of a common cold (aka a viral upper respiratory infection) may include a sore throat, nasal congestion, fever and cough. Viral illnesses do not require antibiotics and usually last seven to 14 days following the time of onset of symptoms. A cough accompanied by shortness of breath, chest tightness, wheezing or blood-tinged mucous may suggest bronchitis or pneumonia. It may be difficult to tell the difference between a viral and bacterial illness, so consult your doctor if your symptoms are more serious than your usual cold. Antibiotics are not effective in treating viral infections, but are useful in fighting bacterial infections. A doctor can help you decide if you need a prescription for antibiotics.

A cough may be dry or produce mucous or phlegm. The presence or absence of mucous and its color are not indications of the seriousness of illness. It is better to cough mucous out of your chest and an expectorant like guaifenesin (Robitussin, Mucinex) may be useful. A dry cough may, however, benefit from a prescription cough suppressant. Again, ask your doctor or pharmacist what to do if you are not certain.

Asthma, allergies, post-nasal drip and GERD may all result in the airway irritation that causes coughing. A cough that lasts more than a few weeks may have multiple causes. These conditions are often overlapping and may require a period of trial and error in both evaluation and treatment of symptoms. You may need a chest X-ray if your exam reveals abnormal breath sounds when your physician listens to your chest. Don't be alarmed if your doctor wants to try treatment that could help a wide range of ailments. He or she may try antibiotics, inhalers, allergy pills, antacids, steroid nasal sprays and/or systemic anti-inflammatory steroids.

A cough causes extra water vapor losses in your breath, and mucous is easier to cough out if it is more liquid than thick, so remember to stay well hydrated and drink plenty of water if you are ill.

*— **Mark Melrose**, DO, is a board-certified emergency physician at Urgent Care Manhattan. E-mail him at **askdrmark@metro.us**.*

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Letters

letters@metro.us

GOP only wins votes by cheating

RE: "GOP NOT GOING GREEN ANY TIME SOON" (METRO, NOV. 20) Before anyone, including letter writer Kevin Metz, becomes too convinced that a Republican-controlled House of Representatives is the true voice of the people, let me point out one major fact: Nationwide, Democratic House candidates received about a half-million more votes than Republicans did. The only reason they still have more seats and John Boehner is still speaker is that crooked, gerrymandered districts, mostly drawn by Republican-controlled state legislatures, guaranteed this outcome. In reality, the people spoke — but because of the Eric Cantors and Paul Ryans and other assorted teabaggers it will be immensely more difficult for the people's will to be done. But, President Obama is nothing if not a fighter, a winning fighter, so we have a fighting chance.

PAUL SIMONS, VIA E-MAIL

Israel justified in bombing civilians

RE: "HAMAS: ISRAELI AIR STRIKE KILLS 11 CIVILIANS IN GAZA" (METRO, NOV. 19) Reading this article made me very furious! I was shocked at how incorrect your newspaper presents information to New Yorkers. Israel bombed the building aiming to kill Yihia Abayah (a senior commander of rocket operations in Gaza) like mentioned. The article claims that this terrorist tried to escape the attack. Actually, he was killed by Israel in the attack! This man is responsible for all the rocket launching by the Islamic Jihad and Hamas from Gaza into Israel aiming at killing innocent people for no reason. Your paper presents the Israeli army as the cruel one with no morals. The people in the house were helping the terrorists by keeping rocket ammunition and fostering terrorists. This fact makes them war criminals just like the terrorists they try to protect.

These terrorists in the Gaza Strip use civilian homes to hide weapons and launch their rocket at Israel. Every Israeli attack in Gaza is executed thanks to intelligence reports that have enough evidence that this house or person is responsible or involved in a terrorist act. Israel doesn't just bomb whatever they feel like. Nothing of these facts and circumstances were mentioned in the newspaper! Nothing was mentioned about how much Israelis suffer and are afraid to get hit by rockets and the fact that over a million Israelis have to hide in shelters from these terrorists.

REUVEN ALAYEV, VIA E-MAIL

It's a bad decision to stick by allies, even when wrong

While my country supports Israel, I do not. I can never support the oppression of any culture over another. My heart bleeds for Palestine and her people. Over the decades, I've watched their defense turn from rocks to rockets against an opponent who has an army, navy, airforce and nuclear weapons. Like all recent American presidents, Obama will do what's best for this country by supporting its allies to the fullest. Too bad it's the wrong decision.

RICH BRITTLE, VIA E-MAIL

E-mail your letters: **letters@metro.us**

Keep them as brief as possible, preferably under 100 words. Metro reserves the right to edit all letters. Please include your name and contact information.

Horoscope

♏ Scorpio **Oct. 24-Nov. 22.** Try to subdue your fondness for risk when it comes to a financial matter with high stakes. Bucking the odds isn't likely to work out too well, and you know it.

♐ Sagittarius **Nov. 23-Dec. 21.** Force yourself to avoid repeating a recent mistake, even if you think things will work differently this time around. They won't. Live and learn.

♑ Capricorn **Dec. 22-Jan. 19.** Just because a certain philosophy fits another doesn't mean it's tailored to your requirements. You'd be happier living your own life, with your own patterns.

♒ Aquarius **Jan. 20-Feb. 19.** Regardless of who you are thrown together with, be gracious and thoughtful. Remember: People are always observing you, and bad behavior won't be readily forgiven.

♓ Pisces **Feb. 20-March 20.** Heed the notion that what you do might affect others. Take care to avoid doing anything that would inconvenience someone else, especially if the other party isn't involved in your decision-making.

♈ Aries **March 21-April 19.** Trouble is lurking if you attempt to stretch the truth regarding some important information. You should tell it like it is, no matter the consequences. If you fudge, you'll just make things worse.

♉ Taurus **April 20-May 20.** There are strong indications that wastefulness on your part could become a major problem. Get hold of yourself immediately.

♊ Gemini **May 21-June 20.** Friends, co-workers and family will all resent it if you're too self-serving. Be careful not to put your needs or wants above those of everybody else.

♋ Cancer **June 21-July 22.** It's important that you see your problems for what they really are and not through rose-colored glasses. It won't do you any good.

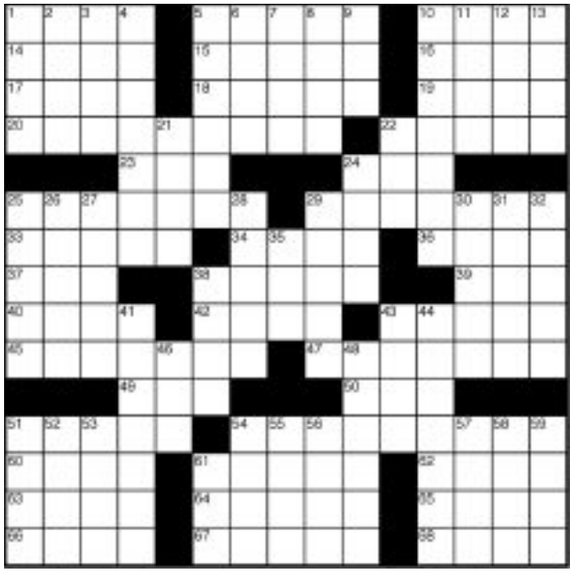
♌ Leo **July 23-Aug. 22.** Engaging in the least expensive activity is likely to turn out to be the most satisfying for you in the long run. No matter how tempting the alternative, stick with the cheaper option.

♍ Virgo **Aug. 23-Sept. 22.** A personal objective you're hoping to squeeze into your schedule looks like it isn't likely to get done, not through any fault of yours. Other factors could be working against you.

♎ Libra **Sept. 23-Oct. 23.** The exaggerations of another might elevate your expectations to false heights if you're not careful, so be aware of whom you place your trust in. The crash could be huge, if you're taken in. **BERNICE BEDE OSOL**

Across
1 Ice-cream treat
5 Habitual
10 Featherbrain
14 Later on
15 Boldness
16 Osiris' spouse
17 Gael republic
18 Made war
19 — mater
20 Space-time tunnels
22 Amaze
23 Boathouse item
24 Nectar gatherer
25 Genetic engineering topic
29 Second draft
33 Gross out
34 Hit dead-center
36 Plant anchor
37 Passport datum
38 Ultralight wood
39 Lots of money
40 Anthony or Chagall
42 Ocean sighting
43 Plugged in
45 Fun sculpting medium (hyph.)
47 Conference
49 Investment options
50 Rapper — Kim
51 Throws
54 Vesuvius escapee (var.)
60 Gung-ho about
61 "—" Hines of jazz
62 Margin
63 Shangri-la
64 Hodgepodges
65 Close violently
66 Give medicine
67 Fresco base
68 Rookie

Down
1 Simmer
2 Cincinnati river
3 Earl — Biggers
4 Windflower
5 Brand-new
6 Lick an envelope
7 Argue for
8 Wide sts.
9 Escorted
10 Would-be callers
11 Kon-Tiki Museum site
12 Luxury transport
13 1917 abdicator
21 Flag down
22 Less than many
24 Composer — Bartok
25 Charley horse
26 Kind of pad
27 "Tosca," e.g.
28 Grind one's teeth
29 Works, as yeast
30 Corn Belt dweller
31 Glittering adornment
32 Chief's adviser
35 More than most
38 Profiles
41 Swirling storm
43 Jacques' girl
44 Slyest
46 Tooth fixer's deg.
48 Border town (2 wds.)
51 Rushed off
52 Cancel
53 101 and I-90
54 Turn white
55 — Redding of rhythm & blues
56 Electrical units
57 Unthinkingly
58 Lab medium
59 Fictional sub commander
61 Pea soup



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		1		4				5

SUDOKU **LEVEL: EASY**

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			1				9	
	6	7	4		5	1	3	8
				3		4		

SUDOKU **LEVEL: HARD**

Solution to Tuesday's crossword

How to play Sudoku: Fill in the grid so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved. You solve the puzzle with reasoning and logic.

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3

In the news

D'Antoni debut

New Lakers coach Mike D'Antoni won't be making his on-court coaching debut until Tuesday.

D'Antoni, who coached the Knicks until leaving midseason last year, was signed by Los Angeles last week. He has been with the team the past week but has been unable to sit on the bench as he recovers from knee replacement surgery.

The Knicks host the Lakers on Dec. 13.

METRO

Sanchez used to hearing from critics

Jets quarterback Mark Sanchez needed last Sunday.

It has been a season of regression for Sanchez, who was looking more like a rookie over the past few weeks than a four-year starter.

Sanchez flipped his form against the Rams, orchestrating a balanced offense and answering critics who said it was time for a quarterback change in favor of Tim Tebow.

"It's part of the job. It's just the way things go when things don't go right on the field," Sanchez said. "That's natural and it's a little more enhanced here in a market like this. ... We've been there before. It doesn't really affect what we're doing."

"I think he's been really better at identifying fronts and everything else. He and [center Nick] Mangold do a great job communicating with each other," head coach Rex Ryan said. "I thought he did a really nice job of that this past week."

METRO/KD

3 STORYLINES TO WATCH

Week 12: New York Jets vs. Patriots, MetLife Stadium
When: Thursday, 8:20 p.m., NBC Next: vs. Cardinals

Gronkowski leads the NFL in receiving touchdowns since 2010, with 37.

GETTY IMAGES

1 Patriots living life without Gronk

With Rob Gronkowski undergoing surgery on Monday to repair a broken forearm, the Jets catch a bit of a break with the Patriots offense losing one of their prime targets.

He is always a matchup problem for a Jets linebacker corps that is aging and slow, and there are question marks as to who will replace him. Tight end Aaron Hernandez is still recovering from an ankle injury and might make a limited impact on Thursday night, which means that the Patriots could well turn to Visanthe Shiancoe.

Shiancoe is a veteran with a proven track record as an outstanding target, but he has failed to register a catch in the two games he's played this season.

2 Jets try to get over the 'Hill' at receiver

Rookie wide receiver Stephen Hill was expected to go through some growing pains, but the learning curve has certainly been steep.

It isn't an issue of the physicality of the NFL, as Hill has been tremendous in his blocking and has certainly gotten open on his routes. It also isn't the playbook, as he has a good grasp of it.

The bottom line is Hill is having a hard time holding onto the ball, with several big drops, including one in the fourth quarter of the Jets' loss in Foxboro several weeks ago.

"One thing I know for sure is we're going to keep throwing to him and I think this young man is going to realize, by the way, you can play this game," Rex Ryan said.

3 Winning the battle of time of possession

One reason why the Jets hung in the game at New England several weeks ago was their ability to systematically move the ball down the field and win the battle of the clock.

The numbers weren't gaudy, but the Jets rushed for 106 yards and seven first downs in that game, meaning they did just enough to keep the chains moving. In doing so, they kept the ball out of Patriots quarterback Tom Brady's hands and limited their ability to score points. In that overtime loss, the Jets held the ball for 35:49, four minutes more than the Patriots. If they can do that again, they have a chance to win.

KRISTIAN DYER
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289
Passing yards per game for the Patriots — all but one completion by Tom Brady. Good enough for fourth in the NFL prior to Thursday.

142.9
Rushing yards per game for the Patriots — with Stevan Ridley leading the way at 84.2 yards per game. Good enough for fifth in the NFL.

289.7
Passing yards allowed per game for the Patriots defense. 30th in the NFL and a good sign for Mark Sanchez and the Jets receivers.

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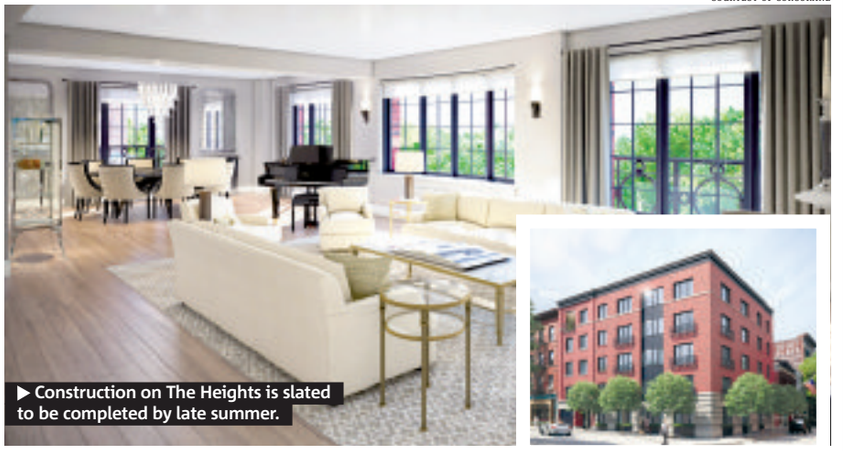
at home with metro

Sprawling condos in Brooklyn Heights

- A new boutique development at the former home of the Brooklyn Daily Eagle is slated to hit the market
- Think: The charm of brownstones without the stairs

COURTESY OF CORCORANL



▶ Construction on The Heights is slated to be completed by late summer.

The Heights, at 30 Henry St., had a soft launch last week. The development features five large, full-floor homes asking between $3.39 million for a 2,418-square-foot, first-floor unit with three bedrooms to $4.95 million for a 2,861-square-foot, fifth-floor pad with additional exterior space. The building also has an automated underground parking garage and a landscaped courtyard.

Construction on the BKSK Architects-designed building, which will have keyed elevator access to all units, is slated to be completed by late summer.

"The legend of brownstone Brooklyn is appealing, and this property has that aesthetic," said the Corcoran Group's Deborah Rieders, who is marketing the property on behalf of developer Fortis Property Group.

"They could have done multiple smaller units or a couple of townhouses, but as much as people love the charm of brownstones, they don't necessarily always love the stairs. This gave us an opportunity to emulate the big spaces of the townhouses but do it horizontally rather than vertically."

Fortis President Joel Kestenbaum added: "There's a great shortage of supply in Brooklyn Heights, and demand for big apartments is very strong."

Fortis purchased the development site for $3.5 million in April, public records show. The design of the building was criticized earlier this year by community organizations that deemed it too tame.

KATHERINE CLARKE/ THE REAL DEAL

Celeb real estate

Madonna lists UWS spread for $23.5M

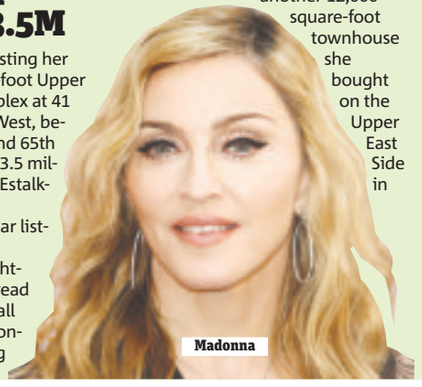
Madonna is listing her 6,000-square-foot Upper West Side duplex at 41 Central Park West, between 64th and 65th streets, for $23.5 million, the Real Estalker reported.

The pop star listed the six-bedroom, eight-bathroom spread at Harperly Hall for sale on Monday, according to Streeteasy.com. The listing brokers are Arabella Greene Buckworth of Brown Harris Stevens and Adam Modlin of the Modlin Group.

Madonna is reportedly selling because she favors living in another 12,000-square-foot townhouse she bought on the Upper East Side in 2009. The mansion reportedly set her back $32.5 million. It was not clear when she purchased the Harperly combination. The apartment, on the fifth and sixth floors of the 12-story building, has 10-foot ceilings, five wood-burning fireplaces, French doors and park-facing Juliet balconies, according to the listing.

The building has a central courtyard with a manned gatehouse, access to a 20-car garage and a fully landscaped roof terrace.

KATHERINE CLARKE/ THE REAL DEAL



Madonna

TheRealDeal.com is a daily blog and monthly magazine covering real estate in the New York metro area.

THE REAL DEAL

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(sound familiar?)

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at home with metro

Make yourself at home!

Hosting friends or family this holiday season? It's the small gestures that really make houseguests feel welcome Warning: You might be seeing them more often after this stay

Not all of us have the luxury of a guest bedroom — but regardless, we want our loved ones to feel comfortable when they stay over. Here are a few tips to make them feel like they're at a cozier Four Seasons.

TINA CHADHA
tina.chadha@metro.us

Don't wait for them to ask

Set out a towel and some small luxuries — like an eye mask or those little bottles of fancy body wash and lotion you swiped from your last hotel stay — on the foot of their makeshift bed. Also, write down your Internet password so they can log on to your computer without feeling like a burden.

▶ Stock up on tissues and TP before your guests come to town.

COMSTOCK

Find them a place

Before your out-of-town visitors arrive, designate a space that will be just theirs. Clear the area so that when they get there, they have a place to settle in. This might involve setting up the air mattress in advance, clearing out a drawer for their things, making some room in your own closet or investing in a luggage rack to prop up their suitcase.

Give them a tour

Even if you live in a teeny tiny apartment, show your guests around. Take them to the kitchen and point out the correct cabinets for glasses and how to use the coffeemaker. Then show them the snacks — like their favorite flavor of Haagen Dazs — you've stocked up on, and invite them to help themselves.

POLKA DOT

▶ A nightstand is key.

The all-important nightstand

A few touches can make even sleeping on your couch feel like a retreat. Place a table next to their bed with the following key items: a lamp in case they want to read before bed, some magazines, a book you like and a carafe with with water.

Go the extra mile

To really give your guests the royal treatment, make a beautiful bed. Iron their sheets for that crisp, fresh feel and include both a lighter cover and heavier blanket to give them options. Put out fresh-cut flowers (the ones from the bodega work just fine) and finish things off with a chocolate on their pillow.

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